

Wethersfield Tourism Commission

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday January 29, 2013 5:30 pm
Town Hall, Town Manager's Conference Room

- 1) Call to Order – Chair Traczyk called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.
- 2) Roll call (5 members required for quorum)

	Present	Absent	Excused
Chris Traczyk, Chair	x		
Katie Sullivan, Vice Chair		x	
Charlie Forsdick		x	
Elaine St. Onge			x
Charles Ford	x		
Shireen Aforismo	x		
Dorcas McHugh			x
Ellen Spratlin	x		
Cynthia Riccio		x	
Carol Hall (alternate)	x		
Jenna Delay (alternate)		x	

Also present: Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Economic Development Manager.

- 3) Approval of Minutes – November 2012 – Carol Hall motioned to approve the minutes, Ellen Spratlin seconded the motion and all members present voted in favor.
- 4) Old Business
 - a) Rack and Postcard Design – Chris Traczyk reported that the Commission has a contract and purchase order with the Pita Group to complete the design of the rack cards (Spring and Fall). Ms. Traczyk also noted that the Commission had previously approved having CTM Media print the cards once the design is complete. Mr. Gillespie reported that the Commission also has a purchase order with CTM as well. Mr. Gillespie was encouraged to finish the design phase with Pita and get an updated price quote from CTM in order to have the rack cards distributed this spring.
 - b) Wayfinding Signage Program – Mr. Gillespie reported that Sign Lite has been delayed with the installation due to the winter weather and now is expected to install the next phase of signs in the spring. Mr. Gillespie reported that the Town has received the federal reimbursement of a significant portion of the grant funds.
 - c) Vibrant Communities Initiative – Masonic/Comstock Ferre Planning Grant – Chair Traczyk reported on the January 16th stakeholders meeting recently held at the Webb Deane Stevens Museum and summarized the planning process underway. A workshop is scheduled for February 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Keeney Center and members were

encouraged to attend and invite others to participate. A formal meeting advertisement will be sent out in the near future.

- d) Main Street Investment Fund Grant – Mr. Gillespie reported that the grant announcements are delayed until the spring.
- e) Tourism Product Development Grant – Heritage Trail Project - Chair Traczyk reported that grant funds have been eliminated and a formal notice from the DECD was recently received. Mr. Gillespie reported that he has asked the State to direct him to other potential funding sources. Mr. Gillespie will investigate alternative funding sources. Mr. Gillespie suggested that he has an intern who is willing to continue to conduct research for the project in the event that future funding becomes available. Chair Traczyk suggested that if funding is available the Commission should compensate the intern for his time, the Commission agreed..
- f) Website Redesign – Chair Traczyk reported that she participated in some training provided by Qscend to assist with the website update. Chair Traczyk also reported that Qscend had emailed the draft of the new design for review, but secondary pages were still missing. Mr. Gillespie will check the design for layout and content. Members reported on web site content pages that they had been reviewing and will provide details to Chair Traczyk.

5) New Business

- a) Chamber of Commerce – Restaurant Week – Chair Traczyk reported that she had been approached by the Chamber of Commerce regarding funds to help support advertising for a restaurant promotion week. She was hoping for more details from Ellyn Laramie and had not yet received any additional information. It was suggested that any action regarding this request be put off until more information is received.
- b) Marsh Street Banner and Lighting – Chair Traczyk has observed that the banner location has not being fully utilized and suggested that the Tourism Commission should take advantage of this opportunity by having a banner prepared to promote Historic Wethersfield when no one else is using the opportunity. Mr. Gillespie stated that he has received some feedback that the banner is hard to see particularly in the evening as the area is not illuminated. Mr. Gillespie was directed to investigate costs for a banner and lighting and report back to the Commission.
- c) Budget – Mr. Gillespie reported that Commission's 2012/2013 budget was \$8,7986 with funding set aside for ad design, ad placement, website maintenance and membership in the GHCVB. Mr. Gillespie reported that additional funding had been carried over from the previous budget for rack card design and brochure distribution. Mr. Gillespie was asked to prepare the budget request for next year at the same level of previous year's funding. Chair Traczyk suggested that it might be wise to request some additional funding for a trolley to support specific weekend events to transport visitors from the Convention Center. Carol Hall motioned to approve funding for the street banner, rack cards, website, intern funds and trolley transportation, Shireen Aforismo seconded the motion with all members voting in favor.

6) Reports – Affiliate Commissions/Organizations

- a) Economic Development & Improvement Commission – D McHugh was not present to report.
- b) Central CT Culture & Tourism – Kate – Not present to report.
- c) Greater Hartford Convention & Visitors – Chair Traczyk reported that she is planning a meeting with staff to discuss opportunities to develop partnerships with Bureau for specific future weekends and transportation options.
- d) OW Shopkeepers – C. Ford was provided with an email regarding a writer looking to promote Halloween events to groups outside of the State. Mr. Ford will reach out and share information on the Scarecrows event.
- e) WHS – Elaine St. Onge not present.
- f) WDS – Katie Sullivan not present.

7) Other Business

Chair Traczyk reminded the members that they had previously discussed changing the meeting start time to 5 pm. Mr. Gillespie will send out an email and make the appropriate change to the meeting schedule.

8) Adjournment – Chair Traczyk adjourned the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Peter Gillespie, Town Planner